

LUCK

BY
FREDERIC ARNOLD KUMMER

Very Efficient Secretary Appears at
Turning Point in the Life of a Sales-
man Who Was Facing Disaster.

THE day in Millersburg had been a scorching one. John Hull, limp, perspiring, paused before the front of the Austen building. The address had been given him by Mr. McIntyre, sales manager of the New York office, as that of the great Austen-Thatcher Company, manufacturers of harvesting machinery. He inspected the windows of the offices on the ground floor.

On one side of the entrance door two lawyers held forth. The other was the office of an insurance company. He passed inside. There was no elevator, no directory in the narrow corridor, no janitor in evidence. Mr. Hull straightened his tall shoulders and began a search of the first floor corridor. The results were negative. He mounted to the second floor, inspecting the names on the doors. That of Mr. Austen was not among them. Only the third and last floor remained.

It was extremely important to Mr. Hull that he should see Mr. Austen and secure from him an order, before the expiration of the business day. Mr. McIntyre had intimated in his last letter that unless Mr. Hull "produced" some contracts of importance by the end of the month his connection with the Standard Asbestos Roofing Company would automatically terminate. It was a distressing thought.

It was like McIntyre to write him that. Mr. McIntyre had wanted the position of western representative for Tom Williams, who was his brother-in-law. But John Hull's talk with Mr. Shelby, the vice president, had been sufficiently convincing to secure him the coveted opportunity. And he had worked. There was no question about that, even though the resulting orders would scarcely pay for his expense account. Luck, it seemed, had been against him. On the many plants he had visited during the past three months none were ready to do business. Orders for roofing had just been placed, were to be placed later, but—there was nothing in sight now. Mr. McIntyre's letter had been written a week ago. It was now the 31st of May. The day before had been a holiday. John realized that within the next half-hour he would have to secure a contract of respectable size or lose his position. The grimness of his smile deepened as he reached the third-floor corridor and began an inspection of the doors which opened upon it. It was a pity, he reflected, that he was so late, but his unsuccessful interview with the manager of the cement works had delayed him an hour longer than he had anticipated. He summoned up all his enthusiasm, determined to catch Mr. Austen, by sheer force of logic, that he wanted Standard asbestos roofing, needed it, could not, in fact, carry on his business successfully without it. Why talk of bad luck? It was only another name for inefficiency.

HIS inspection of the doors along the forward part of the corridor was unsuccessful. As he turned to the rear a young woman emerged from an office and came toward him. She was a very trim young woman, wearing a very trim skirt of white linen. In her hand she carried a number of letters. She was, Mr. Hull noted, very pretty—quite the prettiest girl he had seen in months. The mere sight of her filled him with new courage. A stenographer or private secretary, he said to himself, noting the letters in her hand. Instinctively he adjusted his wilted collar and tie.

As the girl passed she gave him a quick, direct look. She did not smile, there was no suggestion of flirtatiousness in her manner, and yet, in some intangible way, had that her look suggested had not been devoid of interest. Again he straightened his shoulders, mopped the perspiration from his brow. As half-knew many girls who had considered him worthy of a second look. It was pleasant, at this crisis in his career, to be reminded of it. With added confidence he resumed his examination of the remaining doors.

Five of them failed the name of Mr. Austen. The sixth and last bore on its glass front no name whatever. It was the door from which the young woman in the white linen skirt had emerged a few moments before. In desperation, Mr. Hull pushed it open, went in.

There was no one in the outer office, but a white linen coat hanging from a hook told its own story. Through an open doorway he saw a handsome, elderly gentleman sitting at a large flat-topped desk. Was it Mr. Austen? He stepped into the outer office and went to the desk. The secretary was perceptive to bar his way. He swung open the little gate in the wooden railing.

"Will you kindly tell me where I can find Mr. James Austen?" he asked.

The gentleman at the desk glanced up with a smile. "I am Mr. James Austen," he said pleasantly. "What can I do for you?" John concealed his elation with an effort. James Austen, president of the great Austen-Thatcher Manufacturing Company, whose agricultural implements were known the world over, receiving him as courteously as though he had been a valued friend! Well—really big men were always well, he reflected, glancing about the handsomely furnished office. Mr. Austen motioned to a chair.

"I represent the Standard Asbestos Roofing Company," John said, placing a card upon the desk. "We had some correspondence with you last year. I have called in the hope of interesting you in our standard waterproof, fireproof, decayproof covering for factory buildings. The fire underwriters are ready to make substantial reductions in insurance rates as you can see from these figures. We guarantee our product for ten years. It is light, durable, easily applied. The price is a little higher than that of the ordinary tar and gravel roof, but the saving in insurance, the longer service, will more than offset the difference, as you will see from these testimonials from other users of our product. As a civil engineer I am prepared to submit you estimates for the work, complete, although our roofing can be applied by your own men if you prefer it." He laid down a sample section. "If your company

has any work of this nature in prospect, it will pay you in the long run, to give the business to us."

Mr. Austen bent the pliable, elastic composition between his fingers. "Very good—very good indeed," he said. "I looked into the matter thoroughly last year. What is your price per hundred square feet, laid in place?"

John gave the figure, his heart leaping with joy. Something in Mr. Austen's manner told him that he was about to secure an order. Briefly, succinctly he made his points. Mr. Austen nodded affirmatively as each one went home.

"We are about to enlarge our plant by erecting three new buildings," he said, when John had finished. "I estimate the roof area at approximately a million square feet. I am convinced that your roofing is what we want, and I am prepared to give you the order."

JOHN HULL swallowed hard. His throat seemed suddenly parched.

Nothing like this had ever happened to him before, although he had frequently dreamed of such a scene during long, dusty hours on railroad trains. A million square feet! One of the largest single orders the Standard had ever booked! He drew from his pocket a duplicate contract form and with trembling fingers filled in the blanks with his fountain pen. "One million square feet, more or less—laid in place—work to begin to be completed—contract price."

Hastily finishing his task he handed the agreement to Mr. Austen. It all seemed too good to be true. He wondered if some unforeseen catastrophe—an earthquake, an alarm of fire, would yet snatch the coveted order from his grasp.

Mr. Austen read the contract through carefully and signed it. "I will leave the copy as a memorandum," John said, placing the signed document in his pocket. "Our home office will confirm the order at once." He rose, eager to get away. "I thank you with all my heart, Mr. Austen," he exclaimed, extending his hand. "This order means a great deal to me. And I may say that I shall personally supervise the work and see that it is carried out to your entire satisfaction. Good day."

"Good day," Mr. Austen rose offering a cigar. "It has been a pleasure, Mr. Hull, to do business with you. Look in whenever you are in the neighborhood. I shall always be glad to see you."

John took the cigar, and fled. On the stairs he passed the girl in the white linen skirt, but he scarcely noticed her, so eager was he to get back to the hotel to wire Mr. McIntyre. The night letter he dispatched immediately. "Have secured contract for roofing three new buildings, Austen-Thatcher Company approximately one million square feet at standard prices, work to begin July, see letter enclosing signed order." The words came back to him as he walked. "Have secured contract for roofing three new buildings, Austen-Thatcher Company approximately one million square feet at standard prices, work to begin July, see letter enclosing signed order."

This pleasant duty fulfilled, John lit Mr. Austen's excellent cigar and penned a short, precise and very dignified letter to Mr. McIntyre, inclosing the precious document signed by Mr. Austen and giving a few additional details. Then he proceeded to dress. He had just splashed through a cold bath and replaced his dusty business suit with one of gray flannel when the telephone bell rang. A young lady wished to see him, the clerk at the desk said. She was waiting in the ladies' parlor. Would he be down soon?

Mystified, John replied that he would be down in a few minutes. He wondered? He knew no young ladies—at least—at least not in Millersburg. Was this his lucky day? Was adventure knocking at his door? There had been a charming, bright-eyed young person at the offices of the Chemical Company of which he had smiled intently at him, even while informing him that Mr. Routsen was too busy to be seen. Well—the night was a festive one. His success deserved some sort of celebration. He felt like telling someone about it—the hotel clerk, if no one else proved available. It would be intolerable to dine alone on this night of nights, to spend the evening in the hot solitude of his room, or the lonely lobby. He descended to the ladies' parlor, filled with pleasurable anticipations.

THE room contained but a single person, a girl, who came toward him with an air of hesitation. She wore a white linen suit. What could Mr. Austen's secretary want with him? A faint, premonitory chill ran down his back.

"Mr. Hull?" the girl inquired, a worried look in her eyes.

"Yes, I am Mr. Hull. What can I do for you?" His manner was encouraging, in spite of his fears.

"I am Helen Burnett, from Mr. Austen's office. He—I—there is something I must tell you." Her embarrassment increased.

"Suppose we sit down," John waved toward a sofa, his knees trembling. Was anything wrong?

"You—you accepted an order from Mr. Austen this afternoon," she went on, drawing a folded document from her handbag, "for a million square feet of roofing."

"I did. Wired it in to our home office over an hour ago. Why?"

Miss Burnett gazed at him with a troubled frown.

"I'm so sorry," she whispered. "If I could only have reached you before."

"But," John gasped, puzzled, "if there are any changes Mr. Austen would like to have made in the contract, I could—"

"It isn't that," Mr. James Austen is not the president of the Austen-Thatcher Company. He is no longer associated with it. He had no right to give you that order."

John Hull's heart slipped gently down into his boots. No right to give him the order! The thing was incredible.

"I don't understand," he protested. "Why did he allow me to think he had? Why did he sign it?"

"The girl hesitated. To reply seemed difficult. Finally she spoke.

"Mr. Austen's mind became affected some months ago. He had overworked—worried too much about his business, the doctors said. But his—his aberration took a peculiar form. He insisted on going ahead with his

affairs as though nothing had happened. He could not be persuaded to give up his responsibilities—his work. When his family attempted to keep him at home he became violent. The business, he said, would go to ruin without him. Worrying so much about it, you see, had made him think that. In other ways he is quite sane. Finally the doctors advised his people to humor him, so an office was fixed up in the Austen building—that was where the company's offices used to be before they were moved out to

for a moment, when I saw you, but concluded that you were going to one of the other offices on the floor. Whatever made you come to ours? The main offices of the company were moved out to the factory at Glendale months ago."

JOHN HULL stared at the dingy roses which bespattered the carpet. His joy had turned to ashes. "It was the address given me by our home office. We had some correspondence with Mr. Austen last year."



JOHN, BUBBLING OVER WITH HAPPINESS, SPOKE OF HIS PLANS, HIS FUTURE, AS THOUGH HE FULLY EXPECTED HER TO SHARE THEM.

the plant, at Glendale—and he comes down every day and spends his time going over old files—cost sheets and the like—writing imaginary letters that are never mailed—issuing imaginary orders that are never carried out. It has made him very happy.

In fact, the doctors say it has kept him alive—saved his life. "I'm his secretary—his nurse," you might say. I'm supposed to look after him all the time, to prevent such mistakes as the one which happened today. There is an office boy, too, although he isn't a boy at all, but a middle-aged man, who has been in Mr. Austen's employ for a long time. Whenever I am out he takes charge—sends away any one who calls. But no one ever does. There is no name on the door, you know. It was because we are so seldom disturbed that I felt safe in leaving Mr. Austen alone for a few minutes this afternoon. I ought not to have done it without Willie—that's the man I spoke of—being there, but he was feeling badly today—the heat, you see. I let him go home. After lunch. And during those few moments that I was out, as luck would have it, you came in. I passed him in the hall, you remember, and looked at you. Mr. Hull remembered it very well indeed. "I hesitated

Our sales manager should have known of the change, of course." That the mistake had been Mr. McIntyre's did not make his position any the easier.

"But the company's name was not on the door," Miss Burnett objected. "I know. But I was told to see Mr. Austen personally. All our correspondence had been with him. He had entire charge, I was informed, of the company's affairs."

"He did have, until his mind gave way. That was what broke him down—trying to run everything the way he used to, when the plant covered one acre, instead of forty. It is a most unfortunate mistake. I blame myself for it. When he gave me the contract to file—your card—I realized at once what had happened. I came as soon as I could. I would have come before, but I had to take Mr. Austen home. If I had only got here in time to stop your wire to New York!"

Her distress was pathetic. "I wish you had. When I tell Mr. McIntyre—he's our sales manager, you know—that the deal is off—that I've taken an order from a crazy man—he'll think I'm crazy, too. And I shouldn't blame him. Of course, I ought to have gone to the factory,

No brains, no brains! A perfect dumbbell! Well, I guess this is my finish so far as the Standard Asbestos Roofing Company is concerned. Some laugh they'll have on me, at the office." He smiled whimsically. "No use, though, in crying over spilt milk, is there? What we've got to do now is to straighten everything out so that you won't be blamed for it."

"Oh—don't think about me. I can never forgive myself."

"Nonsense. It wasn't your fault. Don't give it a moment's thought. The mistake was entirely mine. But if you think you owe me any repayment, there's one thing you can do—"

"What? If I can help in any way—"

"You can. I'll tell you how. Take dinner with me, tonight, and then go somewhere—where there's music and dancing—things like that—afterward. You see, I'd planned a little celebration in honor of that million square feet order. It meant a lot to me—more than you will ever know. After the shock I've just had, I feel that I need someone to cheer me up. I'm a stranger in a strange town. Don't know a soul. I had almost made up my mind to get chummy with the hotel clerk." He laughed dismally. "Won't you take pity on me?"

Miss Burnett inspected him with a grave smile. In his gray flannels, his buckskin ties, his appearance was distinctly pleasing.

"Very well," she said at length. "I shall have to telephone, first. But—what are you going to do about this order?" She placed the agreement in his hands.

"Nothing—tonight. They won't get

with so delightful an evening before him? He had faced worse situations in France. The mythical order he had sent in would give him at least one day's grace. Tomorrow, anything might happen. He rose. "The telephone is in the lobby, Miss Burnett. Here's a nickel, if you haven't got one handy."

THEIR evening together proved to be one of the pleasantest John Hull had ever experienced. In spite of the disappointment which gnawed at his heart, he laughed as joyfully as though McIntyre no longer existed. Miss Burnett laughed with him, eager to make him forget. A perfect dancer, he said to himself, as they swept over the polished floor. What a pity the contract was not going through. As engineer in charge of the work, he would have been obliged to stay in Millersburg for weeks. It would have enabled him to see her frequently. An unusual girl, quite unlike most stenographers he had met. Witty, intelligent, well-read—a woman in a thousand. And astonishingly considerate. When, at half-past eleven, he sought to escort her home she refused to permit it.

"I live 'way out in the suburbs," she said. "It would take you an hour or more, both ways, and you wouldn't get to bed until after 1 o'clock. Don't forget you have a hard day ahead of you. Just put me on the car and I'll be quite all right."

All the conductors know me. And I'll be off at my door. Good-night. And good luck with Mr. Thatcher. Call me up, after you've seen him, and let me know how you get along."

John remonstrated, insisting that she ought not to go home alone, but she only smiled. He watched her car out of sight, his heart very joyous. A woman in a million. Just the sort to inspire a fellow—make him win success. He went to his room and spent an hour preparing a detailed statement of the advantages and savings to be secured by the use of Standard asbestos roofing. It would be a good thing to show to Mr. Thatcher the next morning.

IT was barely 9 o'clock when he reached the offices of the big plant at Glendale, prepared to make the selling talk of his life. The brisk young man who took his card returned with the information that Mr. Thatcher was dictating, but would see him in half an hour. Thatcher, John thought, was encouraging. Presidents of large corporations, he had discovered, were usually more difficult to see.

The half-hour passed. Then the brisk young man appeared, conducted him to a large, pleasant office. In it sat two men. One of them, a keen-eyed, well-dressed individual of forty, extended his hand.

"I'm Mr. Thatcher," he said. "Meet Mr. Sims, our chief engineer. Sims, this is Mr. Hull, representing the Standard Asbestos Roofing Company. We might be interested in his product, if it meets our requirements. Suppose you go over the matter with him and make a report."

Mr. Sims rose, led the way to another office. For an hour and a half John was subjected to a merciless fire of questions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of asbestos roofing. Thanks to a clear head, and a thorough knowledge of the subject, he was able to answer them without difficulty. The figures he had prepared the night before proved the truth of his claim. It was gratifying to deal with a brother engineer, they spoke the same language.

"It is true that the first cost of our roofing is greater," he concluded, "but it costs more because it is better. Not because we are asking exorbitant profits. There are other good roofing materials on the market, but when you take into consideration the savings, the advantages I have pointed out, I defy you to name one that is better or cheaper in the long run. It simply can't be done."

Mr. Sims looked up from his notes and smiled.

"I will take the matter up with Mr. Thatcher," he said, "and let you know this afternoon. Come in after lunch—say about 3 o'clock. Our plans for the new buildings—he indicated a mass of blueprints—called for a different type of roof, but the figures with which you are interesting at 3 o'clock, then. And suppose you leave me one of your contract forms, containing the guarantee clause of which you spoke."

John laid the blank form on Mr. Sims' desk and went out. He had made a good impression, at least. At the hotel a lady in a white dress, who he had met in the ladies' parlor, had just come in. "Report this office immediately!" It must have been sent after the receipt of his night letter. What did it mean? Had Mr. McIntyre found out—had he, indeed, known all along—that Mr. James Austen was not the president of the Austen-Thatcher Co., and had no authority to place orders? He reflected, he might be accused of something more serious than madness—of downright dishonesty, in not having corrected at once the mistake he had made—in pretending to business he knew to be fraudulent. His luncheon was a disaster, but he kept up his courage and thought of Miss Burnett. Not a word had he seen Mr. Thatcher until after he had seen Mr. Thatcher at 3 o'clock. At the stroke of the hour he again sent in his card.

There was a shrewd twinkle in Mr. Thatcher's grey eyes as he greeted his caller and took up a tabulated report. "Mr. Hull," he said briskly, "we And that it will cost our company approximately \$9,000 more to install your roofing than it would to make use of the material called for in our plans. The merits of the two are about the same. Why should we pay your company that \$9,000?"

"Because our roof is more durable," John said promptly. "He knew, from his talk with Mr. Sims, what the competing material was."

"Then you will not reduce your figures?" Mr. Thatcher laid the report on his desk with an air of finality.

"No, sir," John's dream of an order began to fade, but he stiffened his courage and faced Mr. Thatcher with no suggestion of defeat. "I have named you our standard price. It represents actual cost, plus a fair profit. You can buy a cheaper roof of shoes"—he glanced at Mr. Thatcher's

er's expensive, made-to-order ties—"but they would cost you more in the long run. And we guarantee the life of our product, which your shoemaker doesn't. Nine thousand dollars on, say, a million feet of roofing is only nine-tenths of a cent per square foot. One additional year of wear would more than offset it. Our roof will give you at least additional wear. We guarantee it."

"How?" Mr. Thatcher asked, curtly. "By replacing, at our own expense, any material which fails to give perfect satisfaction during the guarantee period. Our product is a standard product, Mr. Thatcher. We stand behind it."

"What would your guarantee be worth, Mr. Hull, if your company should fail?"

John rose and stepped to Mr. Thatcher's desk. The light of battle flared in his eyes.

"Our company isn't going to fail!" he exclaimed. "But I want this business as much as you do. Give me the order and I will have the company's guarantee backed up by a surety company's bond."

The twinkle in Mr. Thatcher's eyes deepened. He took up a pen. "Young man, that's a fair proposition," he inserted some words in the contract, then signed it. "Have this confirmed by your home office and the business is yours."

JOHN thanked him and groped his way out. His sudden success left him dazed, the more so when a glance at the contract revealed the fact that it called for a million and a half feet, instead of a million. Mr. Shelby would be delighted, whatever Mr. McIntyre's feelings might be. Concerning the bond, he felt no doubts. The Standard Asbestos Roofing Company never quibbled, when the reputation of its products was at stake. No need to wire the office now—he would report in person, as Mr. McIntyre had instructed.

He could scarcely wait to tell Miss Burnett the good news. She had given him her number, informing him that it was not listed in the telephone directory. A moment later he heard her cool voice over the wire.

"Oh, Miss Burnett!" he exclaimed, with a note of exultation. "I got the order! A million and a half square feet! I'm leaving for New York at 9 o'clock tonight. And I simply must see you before I go. Have dinner with me again, won't you? Please." He laughed joyously as she gave her consent.

The dinner together the night before had been a pleasant one, but this occasion partook of the nature of a feast. John, bubbling over with happiness, spoke of his plans, his future, as though he fully expected her to share them.

"I'll be back in a few days," he explained over their wine. "After that, when the work is under way, I'll have to make Millersburg my headquarters, of course. And before I go, there's something I'd like you to know—"

he laid his hand over hers—"something I'd like you to think about, while I'm away. I don't want to deprive Mr. Austen of your services as his secretary, but I think I'm going to need you more than he does. And not as a secretary either. You see, I—"

"I've never met a girl I've felt toward the way I feel toward you. You're wonderful. So if you could see your way clear to—"

"I'm afraid you couldn't deprive Mr. Austen of your services," Miss Burnett laughed, but her eyes very gay. "You see, I—I'm not there any more."

"You mean they've discharged you? Because of that mistake? The confounded—"

"No, it isn't that," she interrupted. "I ought to have told you. I was only there as a—substitute. The girl who was away for a few days. She came back tomorrow."

"You poor child!" He pressed her hand eagerly. "Don't let it worry you a bit. When we are married—"

Again she laughed, her eyes gay as ever.

"You—you really want to marry a stenographer?"

"I want to marry you—the finest woman I've ever met. Of course, I haven't so much to offer right now, but with this new order my future is made. And I owe it to you. You'll never realize how much your being with me has meant to me. I felt when I went to see Mr. Thatcher to day that I simply couldn't fail. Now that you're out of a job and everything, I want you to feel encouraged, too. Let's face things together from now on. We'll have money enough to be happy, and that's all anybody can have, no matter how much money they have. Don't you want your answer now. Wait until I come back. And please try to say—yes."

"When you come back," Miss Burnett drew away her hand. The mystery of her eyes told John nothing, except that which we had said had been the case. She was a very young woman in every way. She could not accompany him to the train, she said—her people would be expecting her. Much to his disgust, John was obliged to make his farewells in the unromantic glare of the hotel lobby. The long line of sleepers had scarcely swept out of the station when he remembered that he had omitted to ask her address. A letter would reach her, no doubt, in Mr. Austen's care. He immediately began to compose one.

MR. JAMES THATCHER, having finished an excellent dinner, was sitting in his library reading the evening papers when Helen Burnett came in. He glanced up with a quizzical smile.

"Well, Helen," he asked, "what mischief have you been up to now? Dinner's been over for an hour."

She sat on the arm of his chair and rumpled his mop of gray hair.

"Uncle Jim," she said, "what did you do about that old goose, I told you to let the plant to see you today about that roofing contract?"

Mr. Thatcher smiled, the amused twinkle still in his eyes.

"The one your grandfather gave the order to. Why, I like him first rate. Plenty of brains. And courage, too. I gave him the contract—"

"But that's not the old goose," she laughed. "I'm going to marry him."

Ring Lardner Opens Warfare For New Rules of Etiquette

TO the editor: We are now bordering on the last day of the convention season and the hotel owners in Detroit and Atlantic City where practically all the conventions are held are preparing for same by hiring extra house detectives and putting a padlock on their soap and towel boxes.

Well I don't belong to nothing and don't expect to tend none of the conventions all ready scheduled but will take this opportunity to tell my friends and admirers that I would gladly be a delegate to a convention where something useful would be accomplished in addition to getting bored, namely a convention to disguard and alter the code of etiquette as now practiced and a specially the rules that govern table manners besides a couple that governs the attitude of a man toward what is laughingly referred to as the fair sex.

If they're enough people thinks like I do along these lines I don't see no reason why we can't all get together either at the City of Straits or America's Playground as I have dubbed them and fix up a new code with some sense to it and do away with some of the regulations which is not only silly but borders on the ridiculous and is rapidly making residence of the earth the laughing stalk of the solar system.

Let us take table manners and I will state some of my ideas in regards to needed changes and one of the first that comes to mind is the Soup Rule which has been appealed to the Supreme Court without getting a rumble and the rule I refer to is the rule which makes it a perfunctory offense to tip up your soup dish so as to get all the soup.

They ain't no man or woman living that can pick up a drop of soup from a flat he using only of spoon and the result is that from 1-10 to 1-4 a inch is always left laying in the bottom of the dish which is plane waste as the most economical Jap in the world can't do nothing with left over soup only throw it in the ash can.

A convention of right thinking Americans would step on the Soup Rule and make it permissible to tip the dish to any safe and reasonable angle so as to satisfy a legal thirst for a good sound non-alcoholic beverage.

THE next rule that is in dire need of alterations is the rule in regards to bread and butter. According to the code in usages in exclusive Great Neck homes it is O.K. to take

which you pick out to start in on. The theory in back of this rule is that maybe you won't want only the one piece and if you leave the other one unbuttered why it can be salvaged and maybe used during the following wk. in the kiddies' pudding.

That is the theory and all guests recognizes it, but when they follow it out it is just the same like saying to the house wife you are a cheap skater and further and more while a person may get through with one but bread either held in the hand or laid on the table which ever makes the greatest appeal.

The convention would ask for waivers on the finger bowl which ain't proved no case and should be thrown out of court. The first place when the hostess allows finger bowls to be past around she has much as tells you outright that you have been fondling a second joint with bare hands or that they're a relic of mushroom sauce on the lower lip.

A man with a drop of red he-blood in his veins resents this and personally my fingers has yet to sully themselves by straying into a finger bowl and will state without bragging that I always leave the table with hands practically as clean as when I set down unless of course they was corn or steam clams or something and in the last named case nothing short of a bath tub will relieve the situation.

Under the present regime mine hostess, without I, yes or no from the guests, takes it for granted that a man can get along on a 1-2 demitasse of coffee and wait till a 1-4 after 9 for same.

The convention would compel all hostesses to find out at the start of the meal if they any real coffee steams amongst her guests and treat them accordingly.

PERSONALLY when I get a invitation to dinner, unless it comes from some right minded hostess like Kate Hollis for inst. why I reply with a well modulated but firm No as I don't enjoy a evening of bridge with a headache for a partner.

This will maybe exclaim why I refuse so many invitations and perhaps cause many a broken heart.

Now in regards to a couple of rules governing man and woman. To state the matter briefly on acct. of the lateness of the hr. I would ask the convention to change the following rules:

1. The rule which compels a perfect gentleman to get up and give a lady his seat on a subway or elevated train or car. A great many perfect gentlemen is floor walkers and barbers, a job where you half to be on your ft. all day. A great many ladies is stenographers and very few of them does there typewriting standing up. More gents than ladies deserves a seat and the rule should ought to be fixed so as when a dame gets on a train she must state the nature of her employment. If she has got a setting down job let her ride home on a strap. This amendment would be more than justice on the grounds that if it was not for men everybody would be an angel.

2. The rule which forbids a gentleman from hanging up the receiver till the lady says good-by. All that is ever necessary for a gent and lady to say to each other can certainly be said in 3 minutes at the outside but the way it is now the average telephone conversation between the 2 sexes lasts from 30 minutes to a 1-2 hr. because the lady in question ain't got nothing else to do and hates to give in and the only party that benefits by the rule is the telephone company and the last I heard about them, they don't need no benefits.

RING W. LARDNER.
Great Neck, Long Island, June 1.

THE RULE THAT FORBIDS A GENTLEMAN FROM HANGING UP THE RECEIVER TILL THE LADY SAYS GOOD-BYE.